

By Michael Fathers

Reuter

HUE, South Vietnam, May 4—The charred body of an old woman lay amid piles of rotting vegetables and litter from looted houses.

Two young men dug a shallow grave to bury the body of a government soldier which had lain on the street for two days.

This was Hue this morning, almost empty and lit-

tered with debris and a few corpses after two days and nights ofarchy.

Most of the original population and the war-numbed refugees who flocked to this former imperial city have fled. Up to 200,000 people are believed to be streaming south toward Danang, away from the looting and shooting of defeated government troops who ran from the captured city of Quangtri.

They are also trying to escape from the even bigger threat of North Vietnamese forces mustering for an attack on the city from the north and southwest.

U.S. intelligence reports have warned that the battle for Hue is only days away.

Soldier's Grave

The two young men dug the soldier's grave beneath the stately sloping walls of

(P-25)

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Nixon Trip to Russia a Factor

Senate Delays End-War Vote

By Spencer Rich

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The possibility of a quick Senate showdown on end-the-war legislation evaporated last night, amid hints that the vote may even be delayed until President Nixon returns from his late-May trip to Moscow.

Yesterday afternoon the Senate held its second secret locked-door session of the week on Sen. Mike Gravel's request to publish a classified document in the Congressional Record. But the Alaska Democrat apparently didn't press for a vote during the two-hour eight-minute meeting, and the only action taken was to authorize the verbatim record of the two closed sessions to be made public.

The end-the-war proposal now before the Senate is part of the State Department authorization bill sent to the floor by the Foreign Relations Committee. Sponsored by Sens. Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) and Frank Church (D-Idaho), it would cut off funds for all U.S. land, sea and air combat operations in Indochina after Dec. 31.

Confident they have the votes, administration supporters led by acting Minority Leader Robert P. Griffin of Michigan and Armed Services Committee Chairman John Stennis (D-Miss.) have been pressing for a quick vote this week on Stennis' floor amendment striking out the fund cut off.

But Church and Case, feeling that the current critical situation in Vietnam is causing undecided senators to rally behind the President in an emergency, have been seeking to delay setting a time for a vote, at least until they can confer with Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana when he returns to the Senate on Monday from China.

Conferences yesterday in the office of acting Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia produced no agreement on setting a time.

But Stennis and Griffin agreed to temporarily set aside the Stennis amendment and allow other, less contro-

versial parts of the bill to be taken up in the next few days just as he is about to go to Moscow.

In effect this postponed a decision until Mansfield returns. The conference in Russia also included Foreign Relations Chairman J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.), John Tower (R-Texas), Gordon Allott (R-Colo.) and Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), as well as Griffin and Byrd and Stennis. They discussed the possibility of postponing a vote until after the President's Moscow visit starting May 22, in which he presumably will discuss the Vietnam situation with Soviet leaders.

One way to do this, it was said, would be to strip the Case-Church language from the present bill, with the understanding that it would be appended by Fulbright's committee to the foreign aid authorization bill later in the session.

Griffin said he hoped the whole matter could be laid aside for a while because "even if we win, it demonstrates division in the Senate" and weakens the President

The verbatim transcript on yesterday's secret session on the Gravel papers—a 1969 report on Vietnam prepared for the President by Henry A. Kissinger—will be available late today. Although no conclusion was reached on the question for which Gravel requested the secret session—to decide if he can put the 1969 report in the public record—discussion again centered on whether the Senate has the right to declassify documents on its own, without executive branch permission.

Today, Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.), together with Byrd and other senators, will introduce a proposal to appoint a 10-member bipartisan Senate committee to study the whole issue of how the Senate should deal with classified materials. Cranston also has several proposals on this issue, including one to give any such special committee 30 days to determine whether Gravel should be allowed to put his documents in the Congressional Record.

the 19th-century citadel of the Vietnamese emperors.

The soldier was killed last Tuesday in a drunken gun battle between rival units of the South Vietnamese army who came to Hue with the refugees after being driven out of Quangtri city below the Demilitarized Zone.

Further along the street, beside the Perfume River and beside the fire-gutted skeleton of the central market building, the charred body of the old woman lay unattended.

She also died in a welter of violence on Tuesday night, and the total breakdown in the city's social system means that no one is left to remove her corpse.

South Vietnamese Marines manning defense lines north of the city in preparation for the expected North Vietnamese push this weekend looked rather thinly spread along the road, but their officers were confident and said they were sure reinforcements were on the way.

Ominous Appearance

In the center of Hue, the four-year-old shell holes, bullet-pitted walls and temple gates which still bear testimony to the devastation of the 1968 Tet offensive had a more ominous appearance today. Nearby streets were littered with smashed bottles, broken furniture and layers of rubbish.

Refugees are still wandering around the city, but they seem to be still here because they have lost the will to go any farther.

They spend the day hunting the streets for scraps of food. Shops, markets and restaurants were all sold out yesterday, and today most had been locked up and abandoned.

There are still said to be between 5,000 and 8,000 refugees waiting at a small naval station east of Hue for ammunition barges heading south of Danang.

U.S. officials here said one woman had been crushed to death in a fight for places on a barge yesterday. Two others drowned when they slipped off a barge pulling out to sea.

U.S. Films

American films are still being shown nightly at a civilian compound in the city, but outsiders are barred from eating there because supplies are running low.

At the city's main Phu Bai Airport six miles to the south, refugees screamed at each other and at profiteers as they tried to board shuttle flights laid on by the civil airline, Air Vietnam.

An \$18 ticket to Saigon has been selling at about \$104. People swarm across the runway toward each arriving aircraft coming from or going to Danang.

avy A-4 was down North in the fixed period that ended spokesmen said.

President Thieu stringent new rules for civil servants, or to organize into